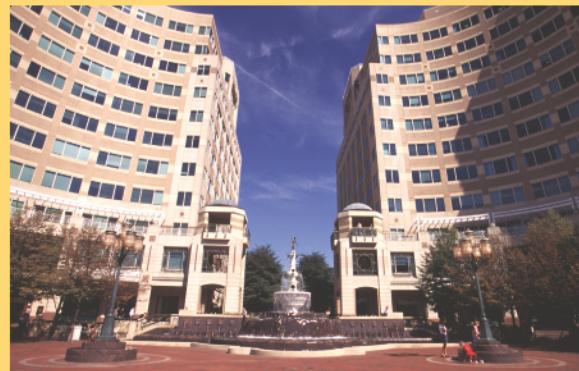


Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project - Wiehle Avenue Extension

## Public Hearing Report

### Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements Environmental Assessment



Federal Transit Administration  
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA Hearing No. 172, Docket R-06)

June 2006



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# **1** INTRODUCTION

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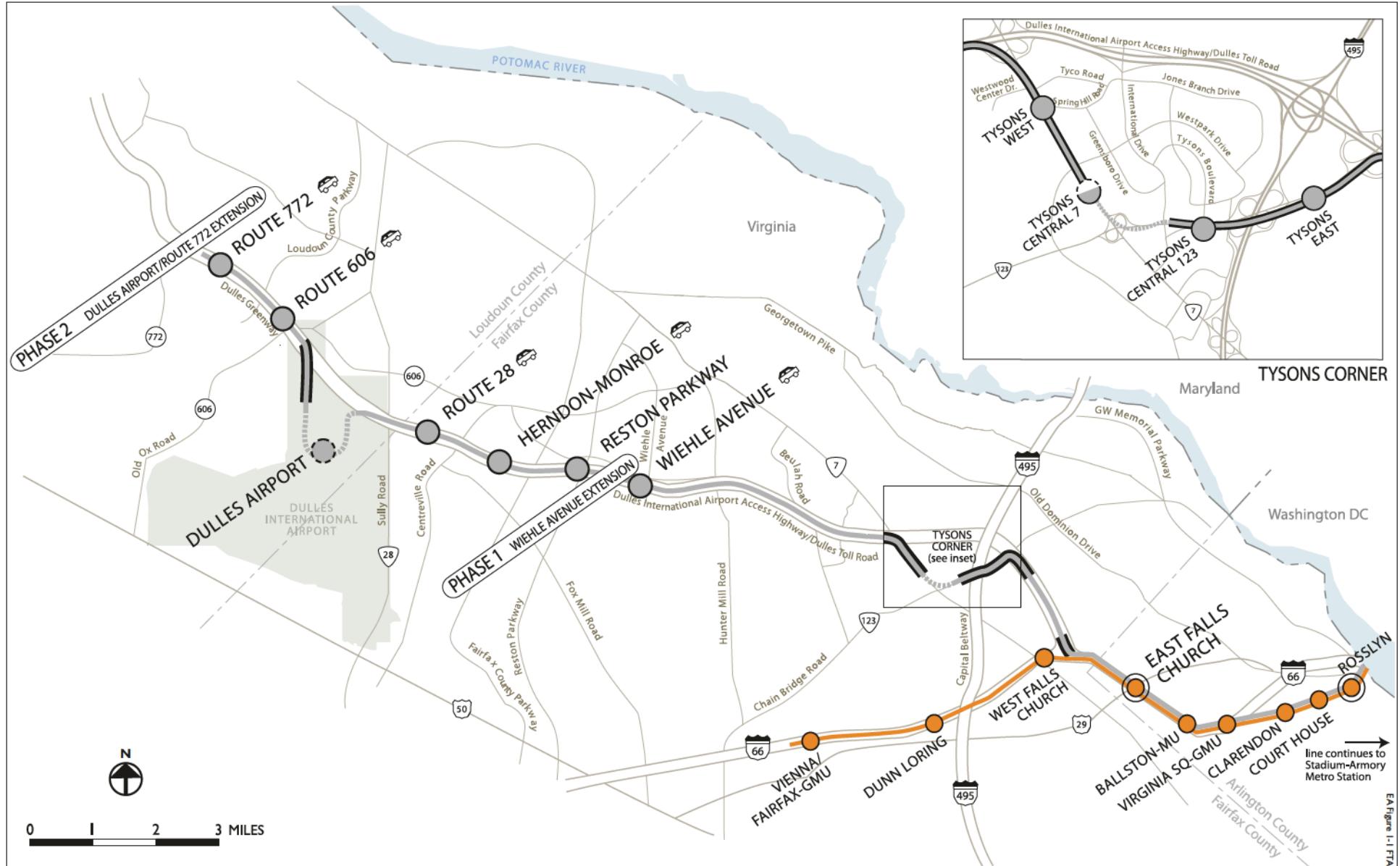
The Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is proposed to improve mobility and transit accessibility in the rapidly developing and congested Dulles Corridor. The limits of the project extend approximately 23 miles from the vicinity of the West Falls Church Metrorail Station in Fairfax County to the vicinity of Route 772 in Loudoun County (See Figure 1-1). The project would be constructed in two phases. The first phase, the Wiehle Avenue Extension, would have an alignment length of approximately 11.6 miles and operate from the existing Metrorail Orange Line to Wiehle Avenue in Fairfax County. The second phase, the Dulles Airport/Route 772 Extension, would continue the line to Dulles International Airport and Route 772 in eastern Loudoun County.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 USC 4321-4347), as amended, to address potential environmental impacts associated with design refinements to the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (formerly known as the Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project). The design refinements, which affect the project's initial construction phase, came about as the project proceeded through the preliminary engineering phase of project development. The EA describes modifications that have been made to the project since the publication of the *Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation* (Final EIS) in December 2004 and since the issuance of a Record of Decision for the project by FTA in March 2005. The EA presents the anticipated changes in effects from those documented in the Final EIS.

A public hearing on the EA was held at 7:00 p.m. on March 28, 2006 at Kilmer Middle School, located at 8100 Wolftrap Road, Vienna, Virginia. The purpose of the hearing was to provide citizens and agencies with an opportunity to comment on the proposed design refinements and changes in effects and mitigation measures from what was documented in the Final EIS.

This Public Hearing Report formally documents and provides responses to comments received at the hearing and during the public comment period. With the submittal of this report, FTA will review the findings of the EA and the responses to comments and will make its formal NEPA determination on the preliminary engineering design refinements.

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**Figure I-1**  
**Project Map**



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# 2

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

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The public hearing for the *Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project – Wiehle Avenue Extension, Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements Environmental Assessment* (EA) (February 2006) was held on March 28, 2006, in compliance with the environmental review process specified by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as amended, the regulations pursuant to the act, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Compact. The public hearing session began with an open house at 6:30 p.m., followed by the formal public hearing proceedings at approximately 7:00 p.m. The public hearing was held to consider the EA and WMATA's *Proposed Refinements to the General Plans* for the Wiehle Avenue Extension portion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

### 2.1 EA DISTRIBUTION AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

On February 24, 2006, 124 copies of the EA were mailed to the elected officials, agencies, and organizations identified in Appendix B of the EA. Also, the EA was made available for public inspection at the public libraries listed below. In addition, an electronic copy of the EA was posted and available for downloading on the project's website at [www.dullesmetro.com](http://www.dullesmetro.com). Finally, copies of the EA on compact disks were available at the project office located at 1595 Spring Hill Road, Suite 600, Vienna, Virginia.

**Ashburn Library**  
21400 Windmill Drive  
Ashburn, VA 20147  
703.729.6680

**Dolley Madison Community Library**  
1244 Oak Ridge Avenue  
McLean, VA 22101  
703.356.0770

**Eastern Loudoun Regional Library**  
21030 Whitfield Place  
Sterling, VA 20165  
703.444.3228

**Mary Riley Styles Public Library**  
120 N. Virginia Avenue  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
703.248.5030

**Great Falls Community Library**  
9830 Georgetown Pike  
Great Falls, VA 22066  
703.757.8560

**Herndon Fortnightly Library**  
814 Ferndale Avenue  
Herndon, VA 20170  
703.435.6868

**Patrick Henry Community Library**  
101 Maple Avenue, East  
Vienna, VA 22180  
703.938.0405

**Reston Regional Library**  
11925 Bowman Towne Drive  
Reston, VA 20191  
703.689.2700

**Sterling Library**  
120 Enterprise Street  
Sterling, VA 20160  
703.430.9500

**Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library**  
7584 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22043  
703.790.8088

In conjunction with the publication of the EA, WMATA also published the *Proposed Refinements to the General Plans for the Wiehle Avenue Extension*. Copies of these plans were made available for review along with the EA on February 27, 2006, during normal business hours, at the following locations.

**WMATA**  
c/o Mr. Jim Ashe, PDEC/ADMT  
600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202.962.1745

**Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project Office**  
c/o Mr. Karl Rohrer  
1595 Spring Hill Road, Suite 600  
Vienna, VA 22182  
703.288.7000

## 2.2 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

As required by federal regulations and the WMATA Compact, an official notice of the hearing was published in the local newspapers—the *Washington Post* on February 26, March 5, and March 16, 2006, and the *Fairfax Times* on March 23, 2006—and on the project's and WMATA's websites ([www.dullesmetro.com](http://www.dullesmetro.com) and [www.wmata.com/about/expansion/dulles\\_home.cfm](http://www.wmata.com/about/expansion/dulles_home.cfm)). A WMATA Notice of Public Hearing was also posted at properties along the project alignment where the proposed revisions would potentially change direct impacts to the property. A postcard advertising the public hearing and availability of the EA was mailed to persons, organizations, and agencies that previously commented on or participated in the project. In addition, notice of availability was sent via e-mail to the more than 10,000 stakeholders on the project's current mailing list. Copies of these notification materials are included in Appendix A of this report.

## 2.3 PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing for the design refinements to the Wiehle Avenue Extension portion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project was held on March 28, 2006, at Kilmer Middle School, 8100 Wolftrap Road, Fairfax, Virginia. The public hearing session began with an open house at 6:30 p.m., followed by the formal public hearing proceedings at approximately 7:00 p.m. A handout was distributed to meeting attendees, which provided an overview of the design refinements and the EA findings. A copy of this handout is included in Appendix B.

Julia Connally, At-Large Urban Representative of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, convened the formal public hearing proceedings at approximately 7:00 p.m. She then introduced WMATA Board member, Honorable Dana Kauffman (Fairfax County Representative), Karl Rohrer, Deputy Project Director for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, and James Ashe, Manager, Environmental Planning and Compliance, WMATA.

Public attendance for the hearing was approximately 70 persons. A total of 22 witnesses provided public testimony, and four written statements were submitted for the public hearing record. Those witnesses who registered in advance of the public hearing spoke first, followed by those who registered at the public hearing. Attendees were informed that if they did not want to speak at the hearing, they could submit a

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

letter or send an e-mail until the close of the public comment period on April 11, 2006. Copies of the sign-in sheet and speakers list also are included in Appendix B.

After the introductions by Ms. Connally, Mr. Kauffman announced that the Virginia DRPT and WMATA were convening the hearing. The hearing was conducted in compliance with the applicable requirements of NEPA and the WMATA Compact. The public hearing was held to receive and consider comments from the public on the EA for the preliminary engineering design refinements to the first phase of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, a proposed Metrorail extension to Wiehle Avenue in Fairfax County, Virginia. The FTA was identified as the lead federal agency for the project.

Public hearing procedures were explained including protocol for speakers, the use of a court reporter and preparation of a verbatim transcript, and submittal of written and electronic comments. Mr. Kauffman indicated that following the public hearing, DRPT and WMATA would review the testimony received for the record and prepare a report on the public hearing. After a review of the public hearing comments and responses, the FTA is expected to amend its NEPA Record of Decision for the project. He noted that the WMATA Public Hearing Staff Report would be circulated for ten days to allow public review and comment. At the completion of the public review and comment period, the WMATA Board of Directors would act on the proposed refinements after considering the public hearing record and staff reports.

Karl Rohrer, Deputy Project Director, made the project presentation providing a description of the following:

- Project History and Background
- Purpose of the Hearing
- Explanation of Why an EA was Prepared
- Overview of the Major Design Refinements
- Changes in Environmental Effects Resulting from the Design Changes
- Changes in Mitigation Measures

A copy of the presentation and script used by Mr. Rohrer are included in Appendix C. Upon completion of the presentation, witnesses testified. Witnesses included representatives from organizations and associations, as well as private citizens from communities that are located within close proximity to the project. Several persons who signed up to speak, later opted not to testify.

Witnesses included representatives from the Dulles Corridor Rail Association, the Committee for Dulles, the Sierra Club, the ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia, Inc., the Coalition for Smarter Growth, and the Dulles Corridor Users Group; and three representatives of the Fairfax County Disability Services Board. The neighborhood civic associations represented included the Oakdale Park Civic Association and the Wedderburn Neighbors. The verbatim transcript of the testimony is included in Appendix D to this report.

### **2.4 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED**

The following section provides a summary of the comments received during the full public comment period. The summary reflects both written comments and hearing testimony. Written comments include

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

e-mails, letters, and statements submitted in person at the public hearing. State and local agencies, as well as the general public provided comments on the EA.

### 2.4.1 Agency and Local Commission Comments

The following state and local agencies submitted comments on the EA:

- City of Falls Church
- Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission

In addition, several public advisory boards and local commissions submitted comments on the EA:

- Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee to WMATA
- Fairfax Area Disability Services Board
- Fairfax Area Commission on Aging
- Metro Riders' Advisory Council

Responses to the agency comments received are provided in Chapter 3 of this report.

The **Virginia Department of Environmental Quality** submitted a comment letter that compiled comments from several state and local agencies. Many of these comments repeat those previously made in the October 27, 2004 Coastal Zone Consistency Determination for the project. Only those comments that differ from the previous Consistency Determination and related mitigation commitments included in the project's March 2005 Record of Decision are addressed in this report. In general, the Virginia resource agencies reconfirmed the project's consistency with applicable natural resource laws and reasserted the project's need to apply for resource permits and conform with state sediment and erosion control practices. Other agencies commented as follows:

- The **Department of Conservation and Recreation** noted that the project would not affect state-listed plants or insects.
- The **Department of Game and Inland Fisheries** recommended additional measures to protect wood turtles from construction activities affecting Pimmit Run and Difficult Run.
- The **Department of Transportation** provided comments about the configuration of Route 7 assumed for the traffic analysis.

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- The **Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning** had questions about the stormwater management pond proposed at the West Falls Church Service and Inspection Yard, and pointed out some inconsistencies in the way the placement of the pond is referenced in the EA.

In a separate letter, the **Fairfax County Park Authority** expressed concerns about potential impacts on County park resources, and requested further information to provide a more adequate assessment of the project's effects.

The **City of Falls Church** expressed concerns about the effects the proposed project on communities in the vicinity of the East and West Falls Church Metrorail stations.

A number of advisory boards and local commissions serving the disabled community expressed concerns about the proposed elimination of the second elevator at the pedestrian bridge entrances (redundant elevators and escalators will be provided within the stations). In particular, they were concerned that the elimination of the redundant elevator would reduce the accessibility of the proposed project for disabled and elderly patrons, and further that bus bridge service would be a poor or ineffective substitute in the event of an elevator outage.

### 2.4.2 Public Comments

The comments received from the public ranged from support for the Metrorail project, in general, to concerns about the priorities reflected in the proposed design refinements. Many of the comments received were not related to the specific issues covered in the EA, but rather were about other project concerns, Tysons Corner land use and development issues, and a recent proposal by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) to manage the project. Responses to the public comments received are provided in Chapter 3 of this report.

Some citizens were in favor of the proposed design changes and supported moving the project forward as quickly as possible. Other citizens were opposed to the design changes, suggesting that the design changes would hinder pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to the stations, especially for the disabled and elderly community.

Similar to some agency comments, many citizens expressed concern about the elimination of the redundant elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. Several commenters suggested that the lack of a second elevator was inconsistent with WMATA standards or policies, and that bus bridge service would not effectively meet accessibility needs in the event of an elevator outage at a station entrance.

Several citizens proposed refinements to the current design or supported entirely different alternatives, such as a tunnel through Tysons Corner or a median rail alignment on the Dulles Toll Road with a circulator service in Tysons Corner. Some citizens were concerned about potential visual and noise effects for the currently proposed design. Some were concerned about existing traffic problems in Tysons Corner, and the likely effect of Kiss & Ride access and future transit-oriented development on traffic congestion. Other commenters suggested the design should better support the area's vision of a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use community, suggesting the design should include more sidewalks and better pedestrian accessibility.

Other comments about station access focused on parking and feeder bus service. Several citizens called for the provision of parking at Tysons Corner stations and expressed concerns that people will park illegally in neighborhoods or at area businesses if Metrorail parking is not provided. Some commenters

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

supported more or more frequent feeder bus service. Others suggested cutting back the proposed feeder bus service because existing bus service was sufficient to provide connections.

Several comments were also related to funding for the project. Some citizens supported the proposed methods and levels of funding, and suggested possible tax increases if addition funding needed. Other citizens expressed a desire for the Commonwealth to contribute more funding.

# 3

# RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THE RECORD

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Public agencies, businesses, civic association representatives, interest groups, and the general public submitted comments regarding the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project during the formal public comment period that followed publication of the EA in February 2006.

During the official comment period, a total of 55 commenters submitted comments through recorded testimony, letters, or e-mail. Each of these statements was reviewed to identify the specific comments made. These comments were then grouped by topic and further summarized to capture the issues or concerns being raised. Responses to comments have been prepared by subject area. Similar comments were grouped together and answered by a single response. Commenters names are listed in parentheses after each comment to help commenters find responses to their comments. In addition, a Commenter Index is provided in Table 3-1 to assist individuals and agencies in locating responses to their comments. A Subject Index is provided in Table 3-2 to assist commenters and other parties in finding comments and responses in areas of interest. Copies of each record of testimony, letter, and e-mail message received are presented in Appendix E.

All appendices to this report are contained in a separate volume (Volume II) that is available for public review upon request at the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project Office located at 1595 Spring Hill Road, Suite 600, Vienna, Virginia, or at WMATA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Interested parties should contact the project office (703.288.7000) for directions to these offices, operating hours, and to make an appointment to review this volume.

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### 3.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

#### 3.1.1 General Support for the Project

**Comment:** Despite some reservations about the proposed design changes, especially those that will affect accessibility, we are highly supportive of the effort to provide Metrorail in Tysons Corner and the Dulles Corridor. We look forward to having service soon. (Anzilotti, Choman, Diedrich, Edwards, Gottfeld, Mogul, Murphy, Ray, Stowers, Tietjen, Tennyson, Wright)

*Response: Comment noted.*

#### 3.1.2 Public Involvement

**Comment:** I urge you to embrace citizen input as you move forward with decisions on Metro in Tysons. Rushing Metrorail construction to provide access to Dulles Airport raises concerns that months of community input, especially on the Tysons Corner portion, will be forgotten. (Rath, Reyher)

*Response: Public input has always been an important component of the decision-making process on this project. For example, this public hearing report is being prepared for use by the, Federal Transit Administration, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and WMATA Board of Directors in their upcoming decisions regarding this project.*

**Comment:** I do not think these hearings are necessary or sufficient. This project needs to go to the ballot box. (Walker)

*Response: The public hearing on the EA was held to facilitate public participation in the continuing environmental review process for this project.*

#### 3.1.3 Agency Coordination

**Comment:** The EA indicates that DRPT has reviewed plans for the proposed stormwater management pond with the Department of Conservation, Fairfax County, and WMATA, and that these agencies agree that the proposed pond is appropriate (page 3-24). Fairfax County's Department of Planning and Zoning is unable, so far, to identify the agency or person that reviewed the plans for the pond, and so does not know the basis of the statement. (Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning)

*Response: The plans for the stormwater management pond in question were provided to the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES), Land Development Services. DPWES has reached an agreement with DRPT and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation that this pond and all of the other project related stormwater management facilities will be designed to meet the stricter of either state or county requirements.*

*A letter to this effect has been submitted by Fairfax County to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to indicate that the outstanding agency coordination needed to complete the Coastal Zone Consistency Review has been completed.*

**Comment:** As a way to ensure that the project remains one of regional benefit, the City of Falls Church calls for the creation of a Dulles Rail Policy Committee, composed of elected representatives from each of the Virginia jurisdictions, including the City of Falls Church. (Gardner)

*Response: Comment noted. Chapters 5, 6, and 10 of the Final EIS (December 2004) clearly show the regional benefits of the project. None of the design refinements evaluated in the EA would affect these anticipated benefits.*

### 3.1.4 Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Role in Project

**Comment:** MWAA should take over the Dulles Toll Road to ensure that revenue is available for improvements in Dulles Corridor, including rail to the airport. (Wieland)

**Comment:** The Dulles Rail Corridor Association embraces the agreement between the state and the Airports Authority, and looks forward to expediting this project. (Nicoson)

**Comment:** How is this document relevant, given the takeover of the project by MWAA? (Diedrich)

**Comment:** Is the change of ownership to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority going to change the relationship with the Federal Transit Administration? Will that affect the cost-effectiveness metric that's driving all these changes? Will local official objections to the new MWAA relationship delay construction and operation of the system? (Warga)

*Response: These issues were not a part of the design refinements studied in the EA. The agreements between the Commonwealth and MWAA are currently under development and at this time, the changes in the scope, timing, and funding for the project are not known. Please continue to check the project's website ([www.dullesmetro.com](http://www.dullesmetro.com)) for updated information.*

### 3.1.5 Cost Saving Priorities and Preferences

**Comment:** The design and construction of the rail system should be first based on what is best for the riders and the community, and then on the resources found to accomplish it. (Dibner)

**Comment:** Make every economy you can that is not short-sighted. (Tennyson)

**Comment:** The proposed design changes are necessary to make the project cost-effective and keep it on schedule. Some of the features we would have preferred to see in the plans should be deferred to move ahead as quickly as possible. We can find a way to add these enhancements back in after the project is built. An affordable rail line, even with decreased accessibility, is better than no rail line at all. (Edwards, Fairfield, Tennyson)

*Response: Comments noted.*

**Comment:** If you need to save money, cut back on the amenities that won't affect the system's ability to carry passengers. Reduce the number of escalators. Bring the line to the surface. But don't reduce the number of rail cars. (Bochner)

*Response: A reduction in the number of rail cars for the Extension to Wiehle Avenue was not a design refinement evaluated in the EA.*

**Comment:** With the scaling back of the design, certain choices are going to be irrevocable. Once we build it above ground, we are not going to be able to move it underground. So let's not make decisions that damage what was previously a nice, urban friendly design. (Warga)

**Comment:** Given the potential new fiscal capacity provided by the project being turned over to MWAA, the Greater Washington Board of Trade urges reinstating the design features that might adversely impact future transit-oriented development in Tysons Corner if left out. (Anzilotti)

**Response:** *The underground section of the alignment within Tysons Corner was shortened approximately 2,300 feet and raised approximately 45 feet. The Tysons Central 7 Station, previously proposed to be underground would now be at-grade. Other design changes included shifting the Tysons East Station to avoid stream impacts, moving the alignment to the median of the Route 7, reconstructing Route 7 to eliminate service roadways and add an additional through lane, and other minor modifications to station layouts.*

*Pedestrian bridges continue to be part of the design. In addition, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

*None of the design refinements considered in the EA would result in a change in the transit-oriented development (TOD) potential in the station areas. The county's plans allow for an increase in intensity in each station area as well as a more diverse mix of uses if transit is implemented. The analysis of the potential for TOD documented in the Draft EIS is primarily dependent on the location of the stations, the existing uses within the station areas, and the amount of vacant or underutilized land. Successful TOD has been proven to occur surrounding aerial, at-grade, and underground stations.*

**Comment:** The accessibility of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is not an acceptable trade-off for cost savings. If we can't build a system that will provide for easy accessibility and maximum ridership, then we should not build the project. It is not reasonable to expect that developers would restore critical pedestrian connections or accessibility features after the fact. The project should be built right from the start. The current cost containment efforts are short-sighted. The project team should restore the features that ensure accessibility for everyone and find a different way to save costs. (Babcock, Choman, Pimley, Rath, Ray, Reyher, Tozzi)

**Response:** *The design evaluated in the EA fully complies with ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Pedestrian bridges continue to be part of the design and, based on public and agency comments, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

**Comment:** To save costs, I propose that the owners of properties where the pedestrian bridges land should fund the construction of the bridges. (Bochner)

**Comment:** Under no circumstances should pedestrian bridges be value engineered out of the project or effectively cost shifted to adjacent landowners as some have recently said in newspaper reports. (Gerber – West Group)

**Comment:** If the money won't cover pedestrian bridges, have the County provide the bridges and all the sidewalks and roads. The bridges are needed to safely cross Route 7 and Route 123. (Tennyson)

*Response: The proposed design refinements evaluated in the EA did not include elimination of the pedestrian bridges over Routes 123 or 7. The elimination of the bridges was cited in recent newspaper articles as another possible way to reduce costs. The bridges remain in the project's current design.*

## 3.2 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED

### 3.2.1 PE Wiehle Avenue Extension – Alignment

**Comment:** Revised alignment drawings submitted for review and consideration. Revisions may or may not reduce costs. (Cambron)

*Response: The suggestions submitted for our review and consideration were drawn on the Final EIS General Plans. These drawings have been revised during preliminary engineering and many of the suggestions proposed by the commenter were integrated into the current design.*

**Comment:** Lowering the aerial structures is important for aesthetics and cost. The project team should allow 4 to 5 percent grades where trains are slowing to stop and accelerating to proceed. (Tennyson)

*Response: These recommended changes in the aerial structure grades are not possible because WMATA's design criteria call for a maximum slope of 4 percent.*

**Comment:** The West Falls Church yard connection is particularly unnecessary since a yard will be built in Loudoun County. Temporary operating inconvenience is tolerable. (Tennyson)

*Response: The new yard lead and the storage track improvements at West Falls Church Yard are necessary to support operation of the Wiehle Avenue Extension until the new Service and Inspection Yard is constructed on Dulles Airport property as part of the project's second phase, the Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772.*

**Comment:** The alignment along what we call the Cleveland site between Colshire Drive and Anderson Road should be put back into its previous alignment profile. The currently proposed alignment requires more private property than the previously planned alignment. (Gerber – West Group)

*Response: During preliminary engineering, the vertical profile of this portion of the alignment was lowered to reduce capital costs and the Tysons East station was shifted to avoid impacts to Scotts Run. The alignment referenced in the comment, previously presented in the Final EIS, is not compatible with the current design of the Tysons East station and its approaches.*

**Comment:** An alternate site should be found for the temporary construction easement which has been shown in some plans on Cleveland Building parking lot. (Gerber – West Group)

**Response:** *The proposed use of this site for construction staging has been included in project plans and coordinated with the property owner since 2003. The site, which is slated for future redevelopment, currently includes an older office building that has been vacant for several years. DRPT will compensate the property owner for any temporary use of the property for construction-related activities in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.*

**Comment:** A single box girder configuration on single piers which combines both tracks should be utilized rather than the proposed paired box girder configuration. This would improve the aesthetics and possibly provide the opportunity for greater spacing between columns. (Gerber – West Group)

**Response:** *Single piers and box girders have been used where possible, up to the point of the alignment where the track centers widen for the Tysons East station. A single pier and box girder configuration cannot be used for the station portion of the alignment.*

**Comment:** The viaduct at Colshire Drive and at Old Meadow Road is too low and designed in a way that would preclude the future possibility of grade separated road connections across Route 123 at these key intersections. This could dramatically limit the potential for improved road network access along this critical roadway. (Gerber – West Group)

**Response:** *Grade separation of these intersections is not currently planned or programmed for construction by VDOT, Fairfax County, or the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in their future transportation plans.*

**Comment:** We strongly believe that the Metrorail viaduct and Tysons East Station should be realigned from the northern edge of Route 123 to the centerline of Route 123 between the Dulles Access Road and the 1-495 Interchanges. We understand this option may need to be evaluated under a separate environmental assessment. (Gerber – West Group)

**Response:** *A shift in the project's alignment from the north side to the median of Route 123 was not a design refinement evaluated in the EA. DRPT has notified the commenter that the alignment will not be shifted to the median of Route 123 as suggested.*

### **3.2.2 PE Wiehle Avenue Extension – Stations**

**Comment:** The current plans should show a proposed future station at Wolf Trap. The project should include engineering to ensure that, at whatever future date it does make sense financially to have a station there, it can be placed with minimal impact. (Tietjen)

**Response:** *The project's current design does not include a station at Wolf Trap Farm Park. The current design includes a 1,400-foot section of retained fill to accommodate a future station at this location.*

**Comment:** The Tysons East Station should be moved back to a location as close as possible to the previously planned location equidistant between Colshire Drive and at Old Meadow Road. (Gerber – West Group)

**Response:** *This station platform and pier locations were shifted to their current locations based on coordination with environmental resource agencies and associated permitting requirements.*

### 3.2.3 PE Wiehle Avenue Extension – Ancillary Facilities

**Comment:** Fairfax County recommends that DRPT and WMATA coordinate with the County's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services regarding the need for, the location of, and the design of the stormwater management facility proposed for the West Falls Church Rail Yard. If it is confirmed that the construction of the proposed stormwater pond would be desirable and appropriate, the pond should be designed and located to minimize impacts, as much as possible, to the Resource Protection Area. The facility should also be designed and constructed to minimize potential adverse visual impacts to adjacent residential lots. (Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning)

**Response:** *As documented in the EA, the pond was designed and placed to minimize effects to Pimmit Run and its unnamed tributaries in the vicinity of the Yard. A Resource Protection Area (RPA) is a land use designation for an area adjacent to and landward of a water resource connected to the Chesapeake Bay. RPAs protect water quality by removal, reduction, or assimilation of sediments, nutrients, or potentially harmful or toxic substances in runoff before entering the bay or its tributaries. The addition of a stormwater pond within or adjacent to the RPA between the S&I Yard and Pimmit Run would serve the same purposes of the RPA and is needed to mitigate stormwater flowing from the S&I Yard. The pond will both correct an existing issue at the yard and mitigate the additional stormwater flow to Pimmit Run that would result from the new yard lead and storage tracks for the Wiehle Avenue Extension.*

*The plans for this stormwater management pond were provided to the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES), Land Development Services. DPWES has reached an agreement with DRPT and the Virginia Department of Conservation that this pond and all of the other project related stormwater management facilities will be designed to meet the stricter of either state or county requirements. Fairfax County and DRPT will continue to coordinate on the design of all project related stormwater management facilities to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.*

### 3.2.4 Capital and Operating Costs

**Comment:** The current cost estimate does not account for the effects of moving construction activity to the center of Leesburg Pike. The productivity of construction crews will be reduced because of limited space for operations and the need to maintain traffic. This will require more night shifts, driving up costs. (Stephens)

**Response:** *The current cost estimate includes the costs associated with construction of the Metrorail alignment in the median of Route 7.*

### 3.2.5 Alternatives to Current Design

**Comment:** The Dulles Corridor Rail Line should be underground through the entire Tysons Corner area. It is especially important to have the line underground where it passes through residential areas. Advanced tunnel technology is available that could reduce costs; we should not ignore this option. Many communities in the Tysons Corner area have expressed a desire for an underground plan. (Dibner, Kuhn, Rath, Schwartz, Solomon, Tietjen, Tozzi, Wieland)

**Comment:** The costs of the tunnel option merit independent review. (Gerber – West Group, Schwartz)

**Comment:** A subway alternative is not appropriate for Tysons Corner. The costs of such an alternative are too high. Much higher than when Metro was originally built. Moreover, the perception that subway construction will be less disruptive than aerial construction is not true. (Gottfeld, Tennyson)

*Response: A tunnel alternative was not one of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. A full tunnel alternative through Tysons Corner was eliminated during the alternatives analysis conducted during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Following publication of the Draft EIS, a tunnel version of the project's current alignment was re-evaluated and again eliminated from further consideration due to the additional costs and risks associated with underground construction. For more detailed information, please refer to the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (May 2001), the Final Alternatives Analysis Report Addendum (November 2004), and Chapter 2 of the Final EIS (December 2004) Appendix J (Public and Agency Comments and Responses).*

*In May 2006, following the circulation of the EA and the close of the public comment period, the Virginia Secretary of Transportation commissioned an independent panel to investigate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of a new tunnel alternative in Tysons Corner. After reviewing the panel's findings and recommendations, the Secretary will make a determination of whether or not to advance and further evaluate this alternative.*

**Comment:** The project team should consider an alternative that keeps Metrorail in the median of the Dulles Toll Road, with a connection to a bus or light rail circulator loop in Tysons Corner. Such a service would provide a better connection to destinations in Tysons Corner. (Hofer, Holland)

*Response: This alternative was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. An alternative that included Metrorail in the median of the Dulles Connector Road with a connection to transit feeder service through Tysons Corner (called Alignment T8) was eliminated during the alternatives analysis conducted during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For more detailed information, please refer to the Final Alternatives Analysis Report (May 2001) and Chapter 2 of the Final EIS (December 2004) Appendix J (Public and Agency Comments and Responses).*

**Comment:** It is time to reconsider a bus rapid transit option, or a combination of rail and bus rapid transit. The Federal Transit Administration is supportive of this new mode. (St. Thomas, Tozzi)

*Response: This alternative was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was eliminated from further consideration following publication of the Draft EIS. Based on the evaluation of alternatives contained in the Draft EIS, the*

*record of public comments, and agency coordination, a Metrorail extension was formally adopted as the region's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the WMATA Board of Directors. A more detailed discussion of the rationale for this decision is presented in the Final EIS.*

**Comment:** We need to have access from all four corners of the Wiehle Avenue/Dulles Toll Road interchange. The lack of this access is a short-coming of the current design. Hopefully, this will be addressed during the process of considering developer proposals at that station area. (Stowers)

*Response: The proposed modification was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. The current design includes pedestrian bridges from the Wiehle Avenue station to both the north and south sides of the Dulles Toll Road. None of the proposed improvements is anticipated to preclude the ability to further enhance connections to the north and south sides of the station along the Dulles Toll Road.*

**Comment:** The Dulles Corridor System must be a three-track system capable of providing express service. (Hurysz)

*Response: This alternative was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. An alignment that included such express service (called Alignment T12) was eliminated during the alternatives analysis conducted as a result of comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For more detailed information, please refer to the Final Alternatives Analysis Report Addendum (November 2004) and Chapter 2 of the Final EIS (December 2004) Appendix J (Public and Agency Comments and Responses).*

**Comment:** A heavy rail system like this will not work. The Dulles Corridor needs to be redesigned with 400-feet right-of-way. It needs to be redesigned for congestion relief. This project provides no congestion relief. (Walker)

**Comment:** Instead of building a new rail line, we should establish more bus routes between West Falls Church and Dulles Airport. (Golas)

*Response: The need for a high-quality, high-capacity transit improvements in the Dulles Corridor is well documented. During the early studies of alternatives in the Dulles Corridor (Dulles Corridor Transportation Study (1997) and Supplement to the Dulles Corridor Transportation Study (1999)), express bus service and highway improvements were eliminated from further consideration as stand-alone alternatives because they could not adequately address future demand in the Dulles Corridor.*

### **3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

#### **3.3.1 Displacements and Relocation**

**Comment:** There is no indication whether any of the parcels to be targeted for acquisition are Fairfax County Park Authority-owned or Fairfax County Board of Supervisors-owned properties. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

**Response:** None of the parcels slated for acquisition is owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority or is a “parkland” as defined by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act. The project’s Draft EIS, Supplemental Draft EIS, and Final EIS contained detailed assessments of potential impacts to the parklands within the Dulles Corridor, including those owned by Fairfax County Park Authority. For further information, see Chapter 7 (Section 4(f) Evaluation) of the Final EIS (December 2004).

As documented in Table C-1 of the EA, no changes in effects to parks and recreation areas would occur as a result of the design refinements evaluated in the EA.

### 3.3.2 Visual and Aesthetic Conditions

**Comment:** The power lines that cross Route 7 from the south side near Tysons West Station are ugly and must present some sort of safety issue. I would like to see these lines relocated below grade along Route 7 at this early stage as opposed to later when once development begins. (Cherner)

**Response:** During the reconstruction of Route 7, the local distribution lines will be placed underground. The Virginia Dominion Power transmission lines will remain above ground unless Virginia Dominion Power decides to relocate them underground.

**Comment:** The proposed, above-ground design will be ugly and very detrimental to the Tysons Corner area. The project will result in noise and visual clutter for those who live close by, and will decrease property values. Urban, pedestrian-oriented development is not likely to increase because of the visual and auditory disturbance. (Holland, Rath)

**Response:** Changes in the environmental effects from the design refinements—including the additional portion of aerial alignment along Route 7—are documented in the EA. The changes in visual and aesthetic conditions were found to be modest and no additional mitigation was required beyond what is already documented in the Record of Decision (ROD) published by FTA in 2005. The new portion of aerial alignment along Route 7 will result in a minor increase in noise levels. Like all other sections of aerial track, a parapet wall (a wall placed along the track on the aerial structure) is planned to reduce noise.

### 3.3.3 Noise

**Comment:** Where will the noise walls along Route 7 be? (Warga)

**Response:** Along Route 7, all aerial sections of the Metrorail alignment will include track-side barriers (called parapet walls). These barriers will be approximately 4 feet high and serve to block the noise from its primary source—the train running along the track.

### 3.3.4 Water Resources

**Comment:** A permit may be required from the Marine Resources Commission if project encroaches channelward of ordinary high water along natural rivers and streams. (Gallup – Virginia Marine Resources Commission)

**Response:** Comment noted. Project staff will continue to coordinate permits with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission as the project is constructed.

**Comment:** Based on the information submitted and the comments of reviewing agencies, we confirm our earlier concurrence that the proposed project (taking into account the proposed design refinements) is consistent with the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program, provided that FTA, DRPT, and WMATA and their contractors comply with all applicable requirements. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

**Response:** Comment noted. The FTA ROD for the project includes all of the applicable requirements of the original (October 27, 2004) consistency determination. FTA is expected to amend the ROD for this project to include the change in mitigation measures documented in the EA. The new consistency determination will be reviewed against the ROD and additional requirements will be included in the amended ROD, as necessary.

**Comment:** If the project meets the requirements of the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law, it is consistent with the non-point source pollution control enforceable policy of the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

**Comment:** Provided that strict erosion and sediment control measures are implemented, the revised project is consistent with the Fisheries Management enforceable policy of the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program. (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries)

**Response:** As required by the FTA ROD, project staff will continue to coordinate with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that the requirements of the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law are met as the project is constructed.

**Comment:** Projects causing land disturbance of one acre or more are subject to the requirement to obtain a Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) Stormwater General Permit for Construction Activities. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

**Response:** As required by the FTA ROD, project staff will continue to coordinate with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that the requirements for the Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) Stormwater General Permit for Construction Activities are met as the project is constructed.

**Comment:** The project appears to be consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (Virginia Code sections 10.1-2100 *et seq.* and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations (9 VAC 10-20-10 *et seq.*), which constitute the Coastal Lands Management enforceable policy of the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program. (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment:** Non-linear features of the project, such as parking lots and stations, are not exempt from the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations and are required to be consistent with the general performance criteria found in 9 VAC 10-20-120 *et seq.* of the Regulations and the development criteria for Resource Protection Areas (9 VAC 10-20-130 *et seq.*). The Tyson's East Station site plan places the Kiss & Ride facility almost entirely within the Resource Protection Area (RPA) and is not an exempt activity. However, it appears that the design has been modified to minimize the impervious pavement. (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation)

**Response:** *A Resource Protection Area (RPA) is a land use designation for an area adjacent to and landward of a water resource connected to the Chesapeake Bay. RPAs serve to protect water quality by removal, reduction, or assimilation of sediments, nutrients, or potentially harmful or toxic substances in runoff before entering the bay or its tributaries. The portion of the Tysons East Station facilities that are in the RPA have not changed since the Final EIS and therefore were not included in the EA. A description of these facilities and how they relate to the regulations and performance criteria for development in an RPA, are included in the project's Permitting Plan.*

*DRPT has reviewed the project's Permitting Plan with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (the agency responsible for stormwater management) and Fairfax County (the local agency with jurisdiction for implementation of the CBPA). These agencies are in agreement with the Plan.*

**Comment:** The EA indicates that the "new stormwater pond would be placed adjacent to the Resource Protection Area" (page 3-24, first bullet, first paragraph). However, it goes on to discuss the "addition of a stormwater pond within the RPA between the S&L Yard and Pimmit Run" (page 3-24, first bullet, second paragraph). Fairfax County, pointing out this discrepancy, states that a comparison of the pond site in the EA (Figure 2-16, "Changes to West Falls Church Rail Yard") with the County's map of Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas suggests that there will be at least some encroachment into the RPA. (Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning)

**Response:** *The plans for the stormwater management pond in question were provided to the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES), Land Development Services. DPWES has reached an agreement with DRPT and the Virginia Department of Conservation that this pond and all of the other project related stormwater management facilities will be designed to meet the stricter of either state or county requirements.*

*Fairfax County and DRPT will continue to coordinate the design of all of the project related stormwater management facilities to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.*

### 3.3.5 Cultural Resources and Parklands

**Comment:** Cultural resources must be identified and evaluated prior to the establishment of construction staging areas and in areas to be affected by construction. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

**Comment:** The report does not address cultural (archaeological) resources at all. The Park Authority recommends that if there are no changes to effects on cultural resources, this category should be added to

Table 3.1 with a note indicating there are no changes from those presented in the EIS. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

**Comment:** The project has the potential to have direct impacts on Pimmit Run Stream Valley Park, Olney Park, Scotts Run Stream Valley Park near Route 123, Ash Grove/Courthouse Spring Branch, and Difficult Run Stream Valley Park near the Dulles Toll Road. Potential impacts from the project could be loss of park land, structures and grading in the Resource Protection Area (RPA), impacts to wetlands, and stormwater impacts. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

**Comment:** The maps and information provided do not allow assessment of what direct impacts may occur to Fairfax County-owned park properties. The Park Authority cannot fully evaluate the potential archaeological and environmental impacts of the Dulles Rail Extension project because the EA report is extremely vague. The Park Authority would like more information on specific properties, wetlands and stream segments to be impacted in order to make an adequate assessment. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

**Response:** *The purpose of the EA was to document the changes in effects between the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension and the project's current design, the PE Wiehle Avenue Extension. Only those areas where changes in effects occurred were included in the Environmental Effects chapter.*

*Appendix C of the EA included a complete comparison of the effects between the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension and the PE Wiehle Avenue Extension. This table includes the changes in effects documented in Table 3-1 and documents that no changes occurred to the topics not included in Chapter 3, such as cultural resources and parklands.*

*Cultural resources, parklands, and recreation areas were studied in detail in the Section 4(f) Evaluations prepared for the Draft EIS, Supplemental Draft EIS, and Final EIS. As a part of these efforts, both a Cultural Resources Technical Report (Phase Ia) and Identification and Evaluation Reports for both archaeology and historic architecture were prepared to fulfill the requirements of identification and evaluation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended. A Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement between VDHR, FTA, and DRPT was executed on October 5, 2004, and outlines measures to address the project's effects on historic resources and deal with anticipated discoveries during construction.*

### 3.3.6 Biota and Habitat

**Comment:** The proposed project will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects. (Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment:** The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) indicates that the first phase of the project may adversely affect wood turtles and recommends the following measures to protect this species:

- Avoid Impacts to Pimmit Run and Difficult Run. The avoidance or mitigation of such impacts includes protection of the floodplains and tributaries of these streams.

- Preserve Riparian Buffers. Undisturbed riparian buffers of at least 300 feet in width should be preserved along Pimmit Run and Difficult Run. Buffers of at least 100 feet in width should be preserved along all other streams, including intermittent streams.
- Survey for Wood Turtles. Immediately before the commencement of construction activities, a qualified and permitted biologist should conduct a survey of wood turtles. Any wood turtles encountered should be safely relocated to suitable habitat in the nearest perennial stream. The survey and relocation should be accomplished just before construction in order to prevent turtles from wandering into the project area. (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries)

**Response:** *No changes in the effects to water resources, including Difficult or Pimmit Run are anticipated due to the design refinements evaluated in the EA.*

*The first two mitigation measures recommended to protect the wood turtle are already included in the FTA ROD, as is a commitment to distribute information sheets about the identification and treatment of wood turtles to construction contractors.*

*The new recommendation that surveys for the wood turtle should be conducted in Pimmit Run and Difficult Run immediately prior to construction activities by a qualified and permitted biologist will be added to the amended ROD by FTA. The amended ROD will also indicate that if any wood turtles are encountered they will be safely relocated to suitable habitat in the nearest perennial stream.*

### 3.3.7 Traffic

#### General Traffic Concerns

**Comment:** Existing traffic in Tysons Corner is very bad. You cannot allow further development without addressing the existing shortcomings of the roadways. Especially since transit-oriented development tends to also bring too much traffic to adjacent neighborhoods. (Hurysz, Solomon)

**Response:** *This subject was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA, although the proposed reconfiguration of Route 7 is expected to help address congestion issues on this Tysons Corner roadway.*

*Local development policies and permitting processes would mitigate the impacts due to increased densities within the corridor. Fairfax County has adopted non-degradation policies that will limit development that would result in traffic congestion, thus reducing the level of development and limiting any negative impacts due to congestion. Actual implementation of transit-oriented development and the timing and increase in densities within Tysons Corner is under the jurisdiction of Fairfax County. Any mitigation needed to address the increase in development densities would be mandated by Fairfax County.*

**Comment:** Service on the Dulles Toll Road is going to get worse and worse. As a result, the ultimate decision on whether to do this project should be based on its ability to provide congestion relief. The projections from the EIS show there will be no congestion relief whether or not Dulles Rail is built. Have these projections been updated? (Walker)

**Response:** This subject was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. The travel demand projections documented in the Final EIS were not updated for the EA. The Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project would provide an alternative mode of transportation within the region. The Final EIS (December 2004) notes that the project most likely would not solve the current congestion problems on the Dulles Toll Road and other regional roadways, but the project would increase the capacity, mobility, and accessibility in the corridor. In general, every "new rider" generated by this project would result in one less automobile on the Dulles Toll Road or other corridor roadways.

**Comment:** How is all the traffic coming to the stations for Kiss & Ride not going to create a huge environmental impact? What improvements are planned for the existing exits from Route 123 to I-495 north and south? Because I'm sure you haven't counted on all the people coming from Maryland to use this Metro system. (Kuhn)

**Response:** This subject was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA, but it was studied in detail in the Draft EIS, Supplemental Draft EIS, and Final EIS. Only the Tysons East and Tysons West stations are proposed to have Kiss & Ride spaces. As documented in the Final EIS (December 2004), traffic conditions are expected to deteriorate at two of the intersections in the Tysons East Station vicinity. The project includes roadway improvements to address these impacts. Traffic conditions in the Tysons West Station vicinity are expected to remain the same or improve. Improvements at the Route 123/I-495 interchange are being studied by VDOT as part of the Capital Beltway Study.

**Comment:** The City of Falls Church has concerns about the Dulles extension's effect on traffic, transit access and service, and safety issues at the existing East Falls Church and West Falls Church Metrorail stations. The City has repeatedly spoken to this issue at each step of the EIS review and heard no meaningful response. (Gardner)

**Response:** The design refinements evaluated in the EA would not result in any changes to the operation or passenger volume of the East Falls Church or the West Falls Church stations. The project team has held several meetings with the City of Falls Church during the course of the NEPA process to more fully understand the concerns and position of the City as it relates to the project. Issues ranged from parking problems at and near the existing Metrorail stations to the perceived and actual noise levels at the West Falls Church Service and Inspection Yard. Additional traffic and safety issues in the vicinity of the East Falls Church and West Falls Church Metrorail stations are not anticipated as a result of the project.

## Specific Concerns about Traffic Discussions in EA

**Comment:** On page 3-28, Section 3.7 of the EA, the last bullet item in the listing of road modifications should include westbound as well as eastbound dual left turns at the Route 7 intersection with Westpark Drive/Gosnell Road intersections. (Virginia Department of Transportation)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment:** On page 3-29, Section 3.7.1.1 of the EA, it is not clear whether the analysis considers the dual left turn from westbound Route 7 to southbound Gosnell Road. The dual left has been added since January 2006, but the level-of-service numbers in Table 3-9 do not reflect this addition. (Virginia Department of Transportation)

***Response:** The traffic analysis conducted for the EA assumed dual left-turn lanes from westbound Route 7 to southbound Gosnell Road. The final preliminary engineering plans (February 2006) show the correct lane configuration at this location.*

**Comment:** On page 3-29 (second paragraph below Table 3-9), the EA states that traffic volumes at the interchange between Routes 7 and 123 were not reanalyzed because the design refinements would not alter the lane configuration at the interchange. The Virginia Department of Transportation disagrees with this conclusion, stating that the removal of the signalized intersection and left turn restriction at the entrance to Marshall's Drive would affect traffic volumes. For example, drivers heading eastbound on Route 7 with a destination of Clyde's would be unable to turn left to get to it; they would have to make a U-turn at the next intersection east of Routes 7 and 123, head back westbound on Route 7, and then turn right. (Virginia Department of Transportation)

***Response:** Traffic operations along this section of Route 7 were re-analyzed as part of the EA. This analysis concluded that the turning movements at this intersection were redistributed along Route 7. With this design refinement, traffic along Route 7 would continue to operate at LOS F during peak periods, a level of congestion similar to today's conditions.*

**Comment:** Tables 3-10 and 3-11 are deceptive because they present the improvements in delay as a benefit of the rail project. This is not true because the intersection improvements along Route 7 could be built without the rail project. (Stephens)

***Response:** The design refinements proposed along Route 7 were developed in conjunction with VDOT and Fairfax County. The reconfiguration of the roadway is intended to support both traffic flow and rail alignment needs. Because the improvements will be developed as part of the project, the anticipated changes in traffic effects are documented in the EA. As stated in the EA, the anticipated reduction in delays "can be directly attributed to the additional through lanes and additional left-turn storage capacity at intersections along Route 7."*

### **3.3.8 Transit Operations**

#### **Access for the Disability Community**

**Comment:** WMATA is not shy in asserting that Metrorail is one of the most accessible subway systems in the United States. And in many ways, they, and all of us, should be proud of the progress they have made. (Ray)

***Response:** Comment noted.*

**Comment:** The Dulles Corridor rail line should provide better access for everyone, including people with disabilities. An accessible public transportation allows people with disabilities to be a vital part of the community. Persons with disabilities want to be able to use the regular public transportation system; they don't want to rely on MetroAccess. The project plans should create an environment that is friendly to persons with disabilities. (Braunstein, Hurysz, Mogul, Pimley)

**Comment:** I am extremely concerned that many of the cuts in the plans will affect mainly people with disabilities. (Pimley)

**Response:** *Based on public and agency comments, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

**Comment:** I urge project planners and designers to work closely with the Disability Services Board and other members of disability community to ensure the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is fully accessible and usable. (Ray)

**Comment:** When you do other plans or make changes to the current ones, please include one person on your staff who is disabled or specializes in accessibility for people with disabilities. (Pimley)

**Response:** *The design evaluated in the EA fully complies with ADA Accessibility Guidelines. However, based on public and agency comments, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

**Comment:** If the stations are not accessible, then Fairfax County and other jurisdictions will have to spend more money on MetroAccess service for people to travel to and from the Tysons and Dulles areas. The money you save in capital expenditures will instead increase operating expenditures. (Pimley)

**Response:** *In the event of an elevator outage at a station, WMATA uses "bus bridges" to provide connections to the nearest operating elevator. MetroAccess is WMATA's on-call paratransit service.*

### **Opposition to Elimination of Elevator Redundancy at Station Entrances**

**Comment:** Eliminating the second elevator at the entrances to pedestrian walkways at stations is an unacceptable design change. Redundant elevators are needed to ensure that people can still use the local station if one elevator is out of service. Past experience with the Metrorail system has shown stations with only one elevator quickly become unusable for anyone that needs that elevator if it is out of service. The lack of redundant elevators reduces accessibility, especially for seniors and the disability community. But elevator redundancy is important for everyone, not just for the disabled population. Especially during times of heavy ridership. Please restore the original design. (Babcock, Braunstein, Cerry, Choman, Gerber – West Group, Gerhing, Jaffe, Pimley, Ray, Sheehan, Wright)

**Comment:** One elevator is affordable at most stations, but two are needed for redundancy at Tysons 123 and Wiehle Avenue. (Tennyson)

**Comment:** Some have argued that providing one elevator at entrances is sufficient to meet ADA requirements. But what happens if that one elevator breaks down? That elevator outage can cause extensive delays and impose undue hardships on persons with disabilities. Crossing the road poses a nearly impossible task for many in the disability community. (Babcock, Jaffe, Pimley, Ray, Sheehan)

**Comment:** Note that ADA requires that accessible features must be maintained in order to ensure that stations are readily accessible and usable. Moreover, it is important that the project follow not only the letter of the law, but the spirit of the law. (Pimley, Ray)

**Comment:** The provision of one escalator at the entrances to pedestrian walkways is inadequate. Dual direction escalators are a needed feature for all users of the Metrorail system. (Babcock, Braunstein)

**Comment:** WMATA developed a policy (or standards), in coordination with the disability community, that requires all new stations to have redundant elevators throughout. This policy was developed based on a long history of problems with elevator outages and trip interruptions. The proposed design refinements are a violation of this policy. (Babcock, Braunstein, Cerry, Choman, Gerhing, Jaffe, Pimley, Ray, Sheehan)

***Response:** Based on public and agency comments, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

### Accommodations for Second Elevator

**Comment:** The plan proposes only one elevator at the ends of pedestrian bridges. Oddly, revised plans call for second elevator shaft, but the shaft will be left empty. (Sheehan)

**Comment:** The station designs should include provisions to allow the later incorporation of the elevators and escalators that may not be built initially, with minimal disruption. (Gottfeld)

**Comment:** Our checks with elevator experts suggests that adding the second elevator would cost substantially less than DRPT claims. (Sheehan)

**Comment:** The plans could be revised to include a second elevator at some locations in lieu of an escalator. This would result in a cost savings because escalators are more expensive to install and maintain than elevators. (Choman, Pimley)

***Response:** Based on public and agency comments, DRPT is not advancing the design refinement evaluated in the EA that would have eliminated some elevators at pedestrian bridge entrances. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.*

### **Concerns about Proposed “Bus Bridges”**

**Comment:** Although well-intentioned, the bus shuttle or bus bridge is fraught with problems. Having to wait for the shuttle, ride to another station, and later be bussed back is extremely inconvenient and a major barrier to using the system. Existing bus bridge operations often leave passengers with disabilities stranded, waiting for the shuttle for 30 to 60 minutes (sometimes more). In Tysons, congestion would severely hamper bus bridge operations. Moreover, a bus shuttle system would be costly to implement and operate, possibly costing more than installing the second elevator. (Babcock, Braunstein, Gerling, Mogul, Pimley, Ray)

***Response:** In many cases, the bus bridge service proposed in the event of an elevator outage at one station entrance would provide connections to the station entrance on the opposite side of Route 7 or Route 123 or to a nearby station. For this kind of service, area congestion would be unlikely to result in substantial delays.*

**Comment:** How would the bus shuttle service work? How would the person at the entrance notify the station manager that the elevator wasn’t working? How long would the person have to wait for the bus? Is there a sheltered place to wait? (Pimley, Ray)

***Response:** The current PE design includes call boxes at all station pavilions to alert the station manager in the event of an elevator/escalator outage. The station manager notifies the operations department, which in turn dispatches a bus to provide a bus bridge to the nearest elevator.*

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

**Comment:** The project’s success depends on safe and convenient access by pedestrians and bicyclists. Currently, you take your life in your hands if you try to walk around the Route 7 area. Wide sidewalks and extensive bike parking need to be included. In particular, the project should include 8- to 10-foot paved trails along Route 7, as called for in the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan. (Diedrich, Jaffe, Mogul, Pimley, Solomon, Wright)

**Comment:** Many of proposed design changes, such as eliminating elevators and narrowing pedestrian bridges, will make station access less convenient and more difficult. In particular, the reduction in width of the pedestrian bridges will increase the difficulty of getting to and from stations during periods of heavy use. Crowding in the 12-foot walkways will be substantial. Walkways of at least 18 feet would be preferable. In addition, the changes would eliminate the service roads which bicyclists currently use. These roads are appropriate and safe for cyclists to use; however, the 6-foot sidewalks included in the new design are not appropriate for bicycle access. Overall, the proposed changes will make Route 7 even more hostile to non-motorized transportation users. The changes will lead travelers into the path of auto traffic. (Diedrich, Jaffe, Pimley, Schwartz, Tozzi, Wright)

**Comment:** The refinements in EA are not consistent with the vision outlined in the Comp Plan and the County Trails Plan. Route 7 would have minimal sidewalks, no landscaping, and no bike accommodations. Bridges are no substitute for a pleasant pedestrian environment. (Diedrich)

***Response:** The width of the paved area adjacent to Route 7 will vary in width, design, and degree of landscaping along Route 7 due to differing site conditions. During Final*

*Design, project staff will continue to work with VDOT and Fairfax County to further refine the design of the reconstructed portion of Route 7 and associated pedestrian facilities.*

### **Feeder Bus Service**

**Comment:** Shuttle bus service is needed to transport people from their homes to transit stations, especially at stations without parking garages. At stations with transit-oriented development, shuttles will be especially important for reducing auto traffic. Shuttle service should operate every 5 to 10 minutes, rather than every 15 to 20 minutes. (Huryasz, Nicoson)

**Comment:** I recommend cutting back on plans for feeder bus service. Most of this vital service is already in place. Existing routes now serve or could serve Wiehle Avenue, Tysons 123, Tysons 7, and Spring Hill Tyco. New route 19-G is needed to serve more of McLean and Great Falls. (Tennyson)

**Response:** *The feeder bus network in the Dulles Corridor is an essential part of the overall corridor transit network. Feeder bus service plans for the Wiehle Avenue Extension were developed in consultation with technical staff from Fairfax County. These plans also reflect the County estimates of demand for the feeder service as well as additional demand estimates developed by the project staff. The plans have been developed with a focus on providing service from multiple origins to multiple destinations in the counties, and are designed specifically to provide mobility options that are attractive relative to making a trip by private automobile.*

*Circulation within Tysons Corner via transit was a key focus of the project staff when developing the feeder bus plans for the Wiehle Avenue Extension. This service includes both Fairfax Connector service as well as WMATA Metrorail service. In addition to existing services, new Tysons circulator services are recommended to provide internal circulation for Metrorail riders alighting at Tysons Corner stations.*

*An integral part of the project development will be the continued examination of the feeder bus systems serving specific stations; however, ultimately, Fairfax County and WMATA will be responsible for implementing the feeder bus network planned for the Wiehle Avenue Extension and/or modifying existing routes.*

### **Effect on Ridership**

**Comment:** The loss of direct pedestrian connections and major alterations in bus service (to produce the longer headways necessary for staggered arrivals) would result in reductions in boardings at the stations. The EA does not reflect this. Table 3-1 indicates there would be no reductions. (Stephens)

**Response:** *The preliminary engineering design includes the same pedestrian connections at stations proposed for the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension. As a result, no major alterations in bus service have been proposed. Several minor route changes were proposed to provide improved connections to the relocated bus bays at the Tysons West Station. These re-routings would have minimal impacts on bus running times. In addition, for some circulator routes, schedules were modified to stagger arrival times at the Tysons West Station. However, service frequencies were not changed. Therefore, no effects on ridership are anticipated.*

### 3.4 OTHER ISSUES

#### 3.4.1 Land Use and Air Rights

**Comment:** The plans for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project should support both rail service and the walkable community envisioned for the Tysons Corner area in the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan. Development plans should not compromise commuter access, and rail plans should encourage a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use community. We are concerned that the current plans may not support the County's vision for the area, especially regarding pedestrian accessibility. The station designs should be better integrated with the urban design of Tysons Corner. (Diedrich, Reyher, Schwartz, Wright)

***Response:** The project team is working closely with Fairfax County to integrate the new Metrorail stations into the surrounding development. As designed, the stations provide access to commuters, whether they arrive as pedestrians, cyclists, on feeder buses or from any transit-oriented development that might be implemented in proximity to the stations.*

**Comment:** We must de-couple the redevelopment of Tysons Corner from the rail project. Redevelopment is necessary but should not depend on this expensive project that requires huge subsidies. (Walker)

***Response:** This subject was not a part of the design refinements evaluated in the EA. The approval of new developments and decisions on the appropriate locations and timing of growth within Tysons Corner is controlled by Fairfax County.*

**Comment:** I think moving the Route 7 alignment to the median provides opportunities to create a really handsome boulevard. (Nicoson)

***Response:** Comment noted.*

**Comment:** The community of Reston has long asked for air rights development to be planned as part of the Wiehle Avenue station. My understanding is that it will not be possible to put the supports for air rights development in the station area. This is a very negative impact for the community. Allowing air rights development could reduce the negative impacts of the Wiehle Avenue Station. We need to find a way to accommodate air rights development. (Stowers)

***Response:** As currently designed, the Wiehle Avenue Station does not preclude future air rights development by others. However at this time, no specific provisions are planned to accommodate such development. If specific air-rights project(s) are proposed at this location during the construction of the project, any associated technical issues would have to be addressed at that time.*

### 3.4.2 Station Access

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

**Comment:** We are concerned about reports that the pedestrian walkways are going to be eliminated as a cost savings measure. Elimination of these walkways would eliminate the ability of many people to get to the Metrorail trains, especially people with disabilities. (Braunstein, Jaffe, Nicoson, Pimley)

**Comment:** The pedestrian bridges are absolutely necessary except where a traffic signal and crosswalk with pedestrian signals and center island are available. VDOT should provide pedestrian bridges at all locations where pedestrians will benefit—not just at rail stations. VDOT should be held responsible for pedestrian safety on their highways. (Tennyson)

***Response:** The preliminary engineering design includes the same pedestrian connections at stations proposed for the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension.*

**Comment:** What features will the project include to ensure people can safely cross Routes 7 and 123 if there are no pedestrian walkways or the entrance elevator is out of service? Are you going to change Virginia code for right-of-way to add enough crossing time to the light cycle so that older people and people with disabilities can cross safely? Will you have raised lines on the edge of the crosswalk so visually impaired people can walk in a straight line to the safety of refuge? Will there be pedestrian walk buttons in the median? Provisions to allow pedestrians to cross at street-level to median stations could make Tysons Corner traffic problems worse. (Pimley, Rath)

***Response:** The preliminary engineering design includes the same pedestrian connections at stations proposed for the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension. In the event of an elevator outage at one entrance, “bus bridge” service would be provided to adjacent entrances. Any new pedestrian crossings (or modifications to existing pedestrian crossings) would be constructed to meet current VDOT design and safety standards.*

#### Parking

**Comment:** Parking should be provided at Tysons Corner stations. People will want to drive to stations, and if enough parking is not provided, then people will park illegally in neighborhoods and at local businesses. (Kuhn, Murphy, Tietjen)

**Comment:** There are tremendous opportunities to work with shared parking facilities. Perhaps the private sector could come in and share some of the parking at their developments. (Nicoson)

**Comment:** There is no solution to the parking issue in Tysons. If you provide parking, you’ll get more rail ridership, but you’ll kill urban development. (Walker)

***Response:** A 500-space park-and-ride facility may be constructed at Tysons West Station near the bus bays and short-term parking as part of future development. Long-term park-and-ride facilities at the three other Tysons Corner stations were not pursued because these stations are being designed as urban stations oriented to pedestrian access. These designs reflect Fairfax County's plans to transform Tysons Corner into a more densely developed, pedestrian-oriented urban center.*

### 3.4.3 General Environmental

**Comment:** Construction of the project should follow the U.S. Green Building Council guidelines to help mitigate environmental issues. (Mogul)

**Response:** *To mitigate the environmental effects of the project, DRPT will follow the requirements documented in the FTA ROD (March 2005) and any additional mitigation requirements included in the amended FTA ROD.*

**Comment:** The over the Beltway portion and lack of parking facilities will have “serious negative” environmental impacts, such as noise, light pollution, stream and green space deterioration, overflow parking on residential streets, degradation of neighborhood quality. (Tozzi)

**Response:** *The design refinements evaluated in the EA did not include changes to the Beltway crossing or the parking in Tysons Corner. Any adverse environmental effects from the alignment across the Capital Beltway and the lack of parking at the stations within Tysons Corner are documented in the Final EIS. Mitigation measures to offset adverse effects from the project are outlined in the FTA ROD (March 2005) for the project.*

**Comment:** Dulles rail should use cleaner sources of electric power. Consider purchasing power from low-emissions sources. (Diedrich)

**Response:** *The electricity used to power the Metrorail extension will be purchased from existing sources. Analysis of the provider’s power-generation methods is beyond the scope of this study.*

### 3.4.4 Purchase of Rail Cars

**Comment:** I am disappointed by plans to reduce the number of rail cars as a cost savings measure. (Bochner)

**Comment:** The rapid transit cars which are planned for the extension should be incorporated into an order for the entire Metro system. This would be more economical. (Gottfeld)

**Comment:** Only 41 cars should be purchased for Phase I of Dulles Rail. The other needed cars can come from the existing “trippers” on the Orange Line. (Tennyson)

**Response:** *The proposed design refinements for the PE Wiehle Avenue Extension do not include any changes in the planned rail car procurement. The initial phase of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project would include the purchase of 64 rail cars. These cars are needed to support the new service on the Wiehle Avenue Extension. The required number of cars was determined by project planners, based on the operations plan for the Dulles Corridor line and the needs and resources of the existing Metrorail system*

### 3.4.5 Funding

**Comment:** So half the local funding for Metrorail to Reston will come from a temporary \$0.25 increase in the toll on the Dulles Toll Road and the other half will come from the State of Virginia. A temporary

\$0.25 increase is equal to the entire contribution of a state. Is this the best the state can do? Why can't MWAA kick in some money? (Schmidt)

**Response:** *The project benefits from MWAA agreeing to make available the medians of the Dulles International Airport Access Highway and Connector Road for right-of-way at no cost to the project. The amount and percentage of funding by jurisdiction and/or entity are based on a capital cost allocation agreement among the non-federal funding partners.*

**Comment:** It looks like with the Airports Authority proposal that the users of the Toll Road will be paying about 85 percent of the cost of this project. (Walker)

**Response:** *Dulles Toll Road revenues are currently slated to fund a portion of the Commonwealth's share. The implications of the MWAA proposal on project funding are not known at this time.*

**Comment:** I am willing to have my taxes raised to have this project done correctly. (Tietjen)

**Comment:** I support massive funding for this and other rail projects—VRE, light rail, Amtrak, and high-speed interurban. (Hurysz)

**Comment:** This project is so urgent that, should money run short, despite economies, Transit Revenue Bonds should be sold to complete the budget. (Tennyson)

**Response:** *Comments noted.*

### **3.4.6 General/Miscellaneous Issues**

**Comment:** Has the date for the public hearings on the design and structure of new stations been set? (Hudson)

**Response:** *The date for the public hearing on the Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements Environmental Assessment was March 28, 2006.*

**Comment:** The Greater Washington Board of Trade also urges acceleration of full project completion prior to 2015. (Anzilotti)

**Response:** *Comment noted.*

**Comment:** I think the state people who have been overseeing this project, managing it, have done a commendable job. And they have been working closely with all the local and federal officials, as well as WMATA. (Edwards)

**Response:** *Comment noted.*

## RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

**Comment:** The result of continuing this project will be to make the Dulles Corridor and Tysons the most expensive place in Virginia in which to do business. (Walker)

*Response:* *Comment noted.*

**Comment:** Chris Walker's testimony should be stricken from the record as irrelevant and off-base. He has no cost-effective plan to deal with gridlock on Highway 267. (Tennyson)

*Response:* *All comments regarding the project, both positive and negative are welcome and will remain part of the public record.*

**Comment:** The current design is not a realistic design for commuters. I call on elected officials to rethink this project and not put through a \$2 billion lemon. (Tozzi)

*Response:* *Comment noted.*

**Comment:** It is clear, now, that matching the project to the transit needs of the people of Fairfax and Loudoun counties is not a motivating factor. We could have had better. (Stephens)

*Response:* *Comment noted.*

# **4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The findings and recommendations below are based on the analysis contained in the *Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project – Wiehle Avenue Extension Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements Environmental Assessment* (February 2006) and the comments received during the public hearing process that followed its publication.

## **4.1 CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FROM PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING DESIGN REFINEMENTS**

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment (EA) was to evaluate the difference in environmental effects between the Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension and the project's current design, the PE Wiehle Avenue Extension.

As shown below in Table 4-1, the anticipated changes in environmental effects from the preliminary engineering design refinements are modest.

**TABLE 4-1: SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

Measure	Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension	Changes in Effects (Final EIS vs. PE)	PE Wiehle Avenue Extension
<b>SOCIAL EFFECTS</b>			
<b>Property Acquisitions</b>			
Private Residential Properties Acquired (No. parcels)	11	- 2	9
Private Commercial Properties Acquired (No. parcels)	37	+ 3	40
Government Properties Acquired (No. parcels) <sup>1</sup>	14	+ 2	16
<b>Displacements</b>			
Residential Displacements (No.)	0	No change	0
Business Displacements Due to Project Facilities (No.)	3	- 2	1
Business Displacements Due to Construction Activity (No.)	n.d. <sup>2</sup>	+ 6	6
<b>Visual and Aesthetic Conditions</b>			
Tysons Corner Stations	Minimal effect	Modest increase at Tysons Central 7; Modest reduction at others	Minimal effect
Alignments in medians of Dulles Connector Road and DIAAH	Minimal effect	Modest reduction along Connector Road	Minimal effect

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**TABLE 4-I: SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

Measure	Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension	Changes in Effects (Final EIS vs. PE)	PE Wiehle Avenue Extension
Alignments along Route 7 and Route 123	Minimal effect	Modest increase along Route 7	Minimal effect
Portals on Route 123 and Route 7	Minimal effect	Modest increase	Minimal effect
Wiehle Avenue Station	Minimal effect	Modest reduction	Minimal effect
West Falls Church Storage & Inspection Yard improvements including leads	Negligible effect	Modest reduction	Negligible effect
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS</b>			
<i>Air Quality</i>			
Conformity with SIP	Yes	No change	Yes
Contribution to Regional Goals	Partially. Plans assume high-capacity transit improvements for full length of Dulles Corridor	No change	Partially. Plans assume high-capacity transit improvements for full length of Dulles Corridor
Reduced Vehicle Emissions vs. Existing Levels	Yes	Modest emissions increases at intersections along Route 7	Yes
NAAQS Violations	None	No change	None
<i>Noise and Vibration<sup>3</sup></i>			
Noise Receptors Above FTA Criteria Before Mitigation	184	No change	184
Noise Receptors Above WMATA Criteria Before Mitigation	48	No change	48
Vibration Receptors Above FTA Criteria Before Mitigation	7	- 1 receptor	6
Groundborne Noise Receptors Above FTA Criteria	15	- 1 receptor	14
Vibration Receptors Above WMATA Criteria Before Mitigation	15	- 1 receptor	14
<i>Water Resources</i>			
Streams	7 streams crossed Minimal effects	Less proximity effects at Pimmit Run	7 streams crossed Minimal effects
Water Quality	Minimal effects	Less water quality effects at Pimmit Run and Scotts Run	Minimal effects
100-Year Floodplain	Bridge piers placed in 100-year floodplain for 3 streams No change in surface elevation anticipated	No change	Bridge piers placed in 100-year floodplain for 3 streams No change in surface elevation anticipated

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**TABLE 4-1: SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

Measure	Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension	Changes in Effects (Final EIS vs. PE)	PE Wiehle Avenue Extension
Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas	Minimal effects	Less effect at Scotts Run	Minimal effects
Wetlands Impacts (Acres)	0	No change	0
<b>TRANSPORTATION EFFECTS</b>			
<i>Roadways</i>			
Regional Highway Operations	Minimal effect on traffic volumes	No change	Minimal effect on traffic volumes
Local Roadway Operations	Increased traffic in vicinity of stations with Parking or Kiss & Ride areas	Reduced delay in vicinity of Tysons West Station	Increased traffic in vicinity of stations with Parking or Kiss & Ride areas
Number of Intersections Requiring Mitigation	4	No change	4
<i>Transit Service and Operations</i>			
Proposed Tysons Corner Bus Operations	New feeder service proposed to serve Metrorail stations and Tysons Corner area	None. Routing and arrival time changes would not affect operating costs or ridership	New feeder service proposed to serve Metrorail stations and Tysons Corner area; some re-routing of feeder buses near Tysons West Station and staggering of arrival times
Station Access	Two elevators provided at each station entrance; maintains accessibility in the event of an elevator outage	Modest reduction in accessibility for most passengers; considerable reduction in accessibility for disabled passengers	Second elevator at station entrance buildings eliminated; requires the provision of bus service to adjacent entrances in the event of an elevator outage
Maintenance Facilities	Maintenance building expansion at West Falls Church S&I Yard; Dulles fleet maintained at West Falls Church Yard	None. Existing WMATA facilities will have sufficient capacity to maintain Dulles fleet until second phase of project complete	Eliminate maintenance building expansion at West Falls Church S&I Yard; Dulles fleet to be maintained at existing WMATA facilities

Notes:

- 1 Government Properties include approved proffers to be conveyed to a governmental entity.
- 2 Not documented in Final EIS.
- 3 Planned mitigation measures will reduce impacts below FTA criteria.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis conducted as part of the EA and the public comments received, the project team has the following recommendations regarding the design refinements, required mitigation measures, and amendments to the Record of Decision (ROD).

### 4.2.1 PE Design Refinements

The project team recommends that all of the design refinements evaluated in the EA – with the exception of the elimination of the redundant elevators at the pedestrian bridge entrances – be incorporated into the project design. The PE plans for the pedestrian bridge entrance pavilions will be modified during final design to include redundant elevators and any associated equipment.

### 4.2.2 Mitigation and Record of Decision

Based on the findings documented in the EA, the following changes in the mitigation measures included FTA's ROD are recommended:

**Displacements and Relocations.** The acquisition of right-of-way and the relocation of displacees should be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970, as amended. Relocation resources should be made available to all residential, business, and nonprofit displacees without discrimination. DRPT should prepare a detailed relocation plan prior to initiating any property acquisition or relocation activities.

**Noise Effects.** Parapet (noise) walls should be added to the new elevated section of the alignment along Route 7, consistent with similar treatment on other elevated sections of the alignment.

**Transportation Effects.** Additional turning lanes should be added to Route 606 for access to the storage and inspection yard site during the project's initial phase rather than the second phase to facilitate the use of this site for construction staging.

**Construction Effects.** Surveys for the wood turtle should be conducted in Pimmit Run and Difficult Run immediately prior to construction activities by a qualified and permitted biologist. Any wood turtles encountered should be safely relocated to suitable habitat in the nearest perennial stream.

This change in mitigation is related to the potential effects disclosed in the Final EIS not changes in effects documented in the EA. It was suggested by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation during their reassessment of their Coastal Zone Consistency Determination to further protect the wood turtle during construction.

The project team recommends that these mitigation measures be added to an amended ROD by the Federal Transit Administration to signify their acceptance of the preliminary engineering design refinements.